

A

# REVIEW

OF THE

# STATE

OF THE

# ENGLISH NATION

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Tuesday, December 17. 1706.

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I Cannot but interrupt the Thread of this Discourse a little, with the short Accounts following, which however the publick Papers may in some Measure have anticipated, and on that Account it may seem needless, yet 'tis in order to do Justice to those People in *Scotland*, who however different their Principles may be from some Peoples liking, they must not bear the Scandals, some People here in *England* are so vigilant to lay on them.

All the Tumults in *Scotland*, say our honest but warm Gentlemen, are occasion'd by the *Presbyterians*, they are always Enemies to establish'd Governments, and consequently are afraid to come into a Union; lest they should be oblig'd to submit to the establish'd Government in Civil Affairs, and be reduc'd to Laws, Order, and Subjection.

I have no Occasion to defend the establish'd Church of *Scotland*, as such; it would be too much of a Comedy to recite all the ridiculous Attempts to destroy and subject Her, even from her first Establishments, and I have no Inclination to rip up old Scories——The present Subject is the Union; I am sorry to see, there are any Differences about so healing a Subject; I shall be the last Man, that shall encrease them, and the Design of this Paper is, if possible, to heal and reconcile them.

In order to this, I make it my Business to put the true Sense upon every Action, and where bitter, scandalous, and I may say, scurrilous Reflections are made, I would even on both sides explain and reconcile them.

In order to this, I think, I can do nothing more directly serviceable than again to repeat, and on all Occasions prove, that the Kirk of Scotland, as such, is not at all averse, nor has at all profess'd her self an Enemy to the Union in general; as for the Indiscretion of Individuals, I have nothing to say to that, nor is it chargeable on the Body, nor can they be reflected upon for it.

But there are Tumults, say the Gentlemen on the other side, and they receive their Life from the Church; and the general Appearance of the Commission of the general Assembly against the Union has been a great Encouragement to those Tumults and Rabbles, and they have express'd as much among them, and more is yet expected.

The Truth of Fact of this ought, I confess, to be a little examin'd into, and I'll be as concise in it, as I can.

That the Tumults in Glasgow receiv'd their Rise from the Kirk, cannot be, since the Leaders of that Rabble appear to be Profess'd Enemies to the Kirk. Finly their Leader, now a Prisoner in Edinburgh Castle, declar'd himself for King James, and his Posterity, with more particular Marks of Inveteracy, than I care to remark; the poor Wretch being now in Misery, and I care not to insult the meanest Creature in the World, in his Distress.

But from hence it is very plain, this Matter cannot proceed from the Kirk; had it receiv'd any Encouragement by Arguments and Consequences, as some People say, is not this just such a Suggestion, as the poor People had at Glasgow, viz. That the Soldiers were all of their side, and would not fight against them?

Delusions of several Kinds rise from the same Foundation, and they that say to day, the Soldiers won't fight against them, say to morrow, the Church is of the same Mind with them, and the Delusion is equal, as they find now to their Cost.

But say the Gentlemen on the other side, if the Church is not of their side, we are grossly mistaken; for are not the Dumfries Men, that burnt the Articles, all Presbyterians, and are not these the Actions of the same Kind of People?

The Church is at least, say they, made use of, and bears the Burthen in England of all these Seditions.

Really, Gentlemen, I'll be the last Man in Britain, that shall undertake to answer for the Indiscretions of any Part of Mankind: Let every Man and Body of Men answer for themselves, but I cannot but undeceive the People in England here; not so much for the Sake of the People I vindicate, for they need it not, as the People for whose Sake this Vindication is necessary.

All the People concern'd in the Dumfries Expedition, all the People concern'd in the Cameronian Meeting at ... are not only not of the Presbyterian Church, but they are disown'd as Mad-men, and Enthusiasticks by the Church in Scotland. Mess. John Hepburn, and Mess. Crawford are Men depos'd by the Church, the whole Society have disown'd the Church, and are not own'd by the Church, and how can what these do, be charg'd upon the Church of Scotland?

But to put it out of Question, and to clear the Church of Scotland from this Scandal, the Commission of Assembly finding things driving on to the unchristian and unreasonable Extremes, which they are now come to; they thought it high Time to declare their Aversion to all such Proceedings in the following Manner, and to send it as a circular Letter to all their Presbyteries—  
As follows,

Edinburgh,  
Reverend Dear Brother, — Dec. 6th.

**T**HE General Assembly of this Church having appointed us to take care, that it suffer no Prejudice through Neglect of due Application to the Honourable Estates of Parliament, or any other Judicatory concern'd in the Management of publick Affairs. We have in this Juncture, wherein a Treaty of Union with the Neighbouring Kingdom is under Deliberation before the Representatives of our Nation, endeavoured, and are still endeavouring to exonerate our Consciences, in doing what we judge incumbent upon us, for securing the Doctrine, Worship and Discipline, Government, Rights and Privileges of this Church, as now by the great Goodness of GOD the same



same are establish'd among us; and being inform'd of Disorders and Tumults in some Parts of the Country, which the Enemies of our present happy Establishment may be ready to improve, tho' without Ground, to the Disadvantage and Reproach of this Church. We do look upon it as our Duty to recommend to all our Brethren; that as they have in their Station Access, they do discountenance and discourage all Irregularities and Tumults, that tend to disturb the Government of our Gracious Sovereign the QUEEN, to whom we are in Gratitude as well as Duty, under the highest Obligations; seeing in the kind Providence of God, We by Her good and wise Management, enjoy so many Advantages, and upon whose Preservation our Peace, and the Security of all that's dear to us, under God depend.

This in Name and by Order of the Commission of the General Assembly of this National Church is subscrib'd by,

Reverend Dear Brother,

Your affectionate and dear Brother,  
and Servant in the Lord.

I choose to publish this Paper, to discover the Fraud of those People, who would fain fix the Scandal of these tumultuous Proceedings upon the Kirk of Scotland.

If this be a Demonstration of their general Opposition, then it is a Proof, that if any particular Men, tho' Members of that Society, have on any Occasion misbehaved themselves, they ought to charge those Mis-behaviours to the Account of the Persons in particular, and not to the Body of the Church; and if this Method shall not be allow'd, no Church in the World shall be free of the Scandals and Calumnies brought on them by the particular Members; which would be a Method so irregular, that no Society in the World could be free.

If any Man say here; why did they not do this sooner, before the People had gain'd any such Encouragements to Tumult— This may be reply'd to thus; if the Commission has done it, as soon as the real Appearance of Malecontents was to be found among the Professors of their own Religion within their own Church, and consequently

under their Jurisdiction, they did it as soon as in Reason could be expected of them, and circumstantial Mistakes are not in my Province to meddle with, as most that is but an Error in Circumstance, and will not reach the present Case.

'Tis plain, they are Enemies in general, as a Body, as a Church, or as a Society, to Confusions, Tumults, and all Manner of Disorders, and I have therefore given the Transcript of their Act of Commission, that it may testify for them; that whatever is alleg'd, the Kirk continues stedfast in the Obedience of the QUEEN's Authority, Respect to Her Majesty's Person, and due Submission to all the necessary Parts of Government—I might enlarge on this thing, but I think, it needs it not—It cannot be suggested, that Tumult and Riot can ever be of Use to the Church, their Constitution is preserv'd by Civil Government and Obedience to Authority; they are undone and destroy'd as a Body, when the Civil Government is overthrown; and therefore whenever they have Recourse to Tumult and Rabble, which is destroying all Authority, Order and Law, they must be suppos'd to be bereft of their Politick Senses, and being lunatick, be wholly unfit to direct themselves—

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